

**From:** [Holsman, Marianne](#)  
**To:** [MacIntyre, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Good Trade Pickup!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 11, 2014 1:56:32 PM

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[http://www.newsminer.com/news/local\\_news/flint-hills-epa-settle-waste-complaint-over-alaska-refinery/article\\_12a0a62c-3956-11e4-9dff-0017a43b2370.html](http://www.newsminer.com/news/local_news/flint-hills-epa-settle-waste-complaint-over-alaska-refinery/article_12a0a62c-3956-11e4-9dff-0017a43b2370.html)

## Flint Hills, EPA settle waste complaint over Alaska refinery

Posted: Wednesday, September 10, 2014 7:30 pm

**Flint Hills, EPA settle waste complaint over Alaska refinery** By Jeff Richardson / [jrichardson@newsminer.com](mailto:jrichardson@newsminer.com) [newsminer.com](http://newsminer.com)

FAIRBANKS—Flint Hills Resources Alaska has agreed to pay an \$80,000 fine to resolve accusations by federal regulators that the company mishandled hazardous waste last year at its North Pole refinery.

The company's settlement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stems from groundwater cleanup activity at the refinery on June 19, 2013. Flint Hills was processing groundwater to remove sulfolane, an industrial chemical that has been traced back to an old spill at the refinery.

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After filtering groundwater, Flint Hills disposed of the used filters in an open trash bin at the site. The filters soon "self ignited" inside the bins, according to an EPA complaint, requiring a response from the North Pole Fire Department to extinguish two fires.

The EPA alleged that Flint Hills had failed to recognize the used filters as an ignitable and reactive hazardous waste, saying that it had improperly disposed of them at the site.

Flint Hills agreed to pay the \$80,000 penalty as part of the settlement, but didn't confirm or deny that it committed the violations, said EPA spokesman Mark MacIntyre. The company also agreed to change its waste disposal practices in the future.

Flint Hills spokesman Jeff Cook emphasized that the company had self-reported the incident to EPA last year and worked with the agency as it conducted its investigation.

"We have fully cooperated with EPA in reviewing the matter and reaching a settlement," he said.

Cook said Flint Hills changed its disposal procedures immediately after the fire, when it

became clear that the used filters could ignite.

Cook said the refinery had previously drained the filters and delivered them to the Fairbanks North Star Borough landfill as part of the non-hazardous waste stream. They're currently packaged in containers and shipped away for hazardous material disposal.

Sulfolane cleanup has been an ongoing issue for Flint Hills since tainted water was discovered beneath the refinery in 2009. The chemical has been detected since then in a 3-mile-long plume beneath the refinery, resulting in groundwater contamination for about 550 homes and businesses in the North Pole area.

Although the sulfolane spill has been traced back as far as the 1980s, when Williams Alaska operated the refinery, Flint Hills assumed responsibility for cleanup efforts when it purchased the facility in 2004. As of March, the company had spent about \$75 million on cleanup and mitigation costs.

Flint Hills ceased production at the refinery in May, citing those expenses as one of the factors that contributed to the decision to shut down the facility.

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**From:** MacIntyre, Mark

**Sent:** Thursday, September 11, 2014 1:08 PM

**To:** Kowalski, Ed; Downey, Scott; Chu, Xiangyu; Gallagher, Shirin

**Cc:** Conger, Nick; Holsman, Marianne

**Subject:** Good Trade Pickup!

## **[North Pole refinery settles HazMat storage allegations](#)**

HazMat Management Magazine (subscription) - 5 hours ago

On June 19, 2013, **Flint Hills** Resources conducted groundwater cleanup activities at its refinery that generated spent groundwater pre-filters containing iron sulfide. The spent groundwater ... According to Scott Downey, manager of **EPA's** Air & Hazardous Waste Compliance Unit in Seattle, under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), waste generators are required to determine whether or not their waste is hazardous at the time of generation, then label it clearly and store it properly. "In this case, two ...

**Mark A. MacIntyre**

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